

expansion. Why not implement a tax limitation standard on the federal level so that this same effect can be felt by all Americans?

There are a number of important issues which require a two-thirds vote by Congress such as amending the Constitution, overriding a Presidential veto; two events which clearly require the parties of Congress to come to a consensus. The decision to increase taxes is an important issue and it too should require more than a majority, it should require a consensus.

When Congress votes yes to increase taxes, it has an effect on everyone. When I was elected to represent the second district of Nebraska, one of my priorities was to fight against any and all attempts by the federal government to take more money away from my constituents. Last year many of my colleagues and I voted to cut \$792 billion dollars in taxes for hard-working Americans, a great effort which was vetoed by the President. Unfortunately, we had no hope of overriding the President's veto because we could not muster the two-thirds votes necessary from the House. Any attempt by members of Congress to cut taxes is put in jeopardy by the President's ability to veto. We should require any increase in taxes to receive overwhelming support of Congress—a two-thirds vote.

Many of the major tax increases levied on Americans have passed without a two-thirds vote. In 1982, Congress passed the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act which cost the taxpayer \$214 billion dollars without a two-thirds vote; Congress passed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 totaling \$40 billion dollars without a two-thirds vote; Congress passed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989 for \$25 billion dollars without a two-thirds vote; Congress passed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 for a whopping \$137 billion dollars without a two-thirds vote. Finally, Congress passed one of the largest tax increases in American history, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 for \$275 billion dollars by 1 vote not a two-thirds vote. I believe that I have made my point. If you are going to send Americans a tax bill, you better have the support from two-thirds of Congress.

The economy of the United States is at a fiscally sound level, but our taxes remain to be the highest they have been since World War II. As Congress, our main goal is to keep our economy sound and contribute to the current prosperity. Preventing future tax increases will help us in this mission. One way to accomplish this is to require a two-thirds vote from Congress before making a decision that could alter our lives.

Federal tax laws have numerous unintended consequences on Americans. Congress needs to make decisions in the best interest of Americans by ensuring that any federal tax increase is supported by more than just a simple majority. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this bill.

#### A TRIBUTE TO MS. SHIRLEY SCHMITT

#### HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2000*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, today I honor Ms. Shirley Schmitt, who is the fifth-grade

teacher at St. Jacob Elementary School. Shirley was named the school Recycling Coordinator of the Year, otherwise known as the "Recycling Queen" because of her creative ways of cleaning up the world around her.

As a former teacher, I know that you have to be inventive to grab and then maintain the kid's attention. Her recycling program is much more than separating glass and plastic, she makes it fun. Let me share with you some of Shirley's ideas: using pencil shavings as mulch or using 6 pack plastic rings along with a shish-kabob stick to make flowers.

When you are creative in the classroom, and make projects fun, you dare a child to dream. That is the magic of teaching. Thank you Shirley.

#### TRIBUTE TO MS. AMANDA NODINE

#### HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2000*

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I received a letter two weeks ago from a constituent, The Honorable Lucille Craine, who is supervisor of the town of Victory, New York which is in my district. Included in the letter was an essay, written by Amanda Nodine, a thirteen-year-old student who attends Red Creek Central School. Amanda's essay, titled "Our Flag, Why Should We Respect It?", has received various acclamations, including recognition by the Wolcott Elk Lodge and other American Legion organizations.

I am very proud of Amanda for her patriotism and loyalty to our country. She exhibits discipline, sensitivity, and love for her country while also representing her school and her community. I am equally proud of Red Creek High School, the parents, and administrators who are so supportive of this outstanding young citizen.

I have included her essay for the record.

#### OUR FLAG, WHY SHOULD WE RESPECT IT?

(By Amanda Nodine)

The American Flag has many reasons why it should be respected. Yet many people don't understand the meanings of the American flag.

Many Americans fought for our country risking their lives. People died so they could save our country. The soldiers wanted all of us to be free now, in the future, and back then. The American flag shows honor and support for the people who fought, died, and suffered, all for our country.

The flag has many meanings. The flag symbolizes independence, freedom, justice, America, and democracy. The flag has 50 white stars on a navy blue background, and 13 alternating red and white stripes. The 13 strips represent the original 13 colonies. It has 50 stars for all of the 50 states. The flag's colors are red, white, and blue. Red standing for heroism, zeal, and faith; white for hope, purity, and cleanliness of life; and blue the color of heaven, in honor of God, loyalty, sincerity, justice, and truth.

We show patriotism when we salute the flag, fly it on/at important events, government buildings, schools, American legions, Elks Clubs, and other important buildings.

Without our flag we wouldn't be a free country. We could be owned by another country and ruled by one too.

The flag should be respected because it is an important monument and also because it

symbolizes the freedom of our country. Respect the American flag!

#### TRIBUTE TO MR. THOMAS MILLER OF MERIDIANVILLE, ALABAMA

#### HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2000*

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to Mr. Thomas Miller of the Madison County Sheriffs Department. Mr. Miller goes above and beyond the duties of a public servant. Mr. Miller works the night shift with the Sheriff's Department, but still finds time to lead a group of Tiger Scouts.

Mr. Miller has dedicated himself to this group of eager young men and has taught them by example about a life of citizenship and patriotism. The Tiger Scouts respect Mr. Miller and the job he does everyday to protect them and their families, often without proper recognition or gratitude.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank him for his exemplary role as a leader in our community. Children in this country need more role models like Mr. Miller. I believe that this honor is fitting for someone who has given so much of himself for this community and this nation.

I want to wish Mr. Miller and his family best wishes and express to him my gratitude on behalf of the United States Congress for his selfless work with the Tiger Scouts in our community.

#### A CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL GUIDE DOG DAY

#### HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2000*

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, on April 26, thousands of individuals around the world will celebrate International Guide Dog Day. This day was brought to my attention last November, when I received a letter from a constituent of mine, Ms. Christine de Angeli. She is a junior at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Pottomac, MD, and has spent a great deal of time as a foster puppy raiser. She believes that having sight is a gift, and feels that it is important for her to donate her time toward improving mobility for those with visual impairments. At her urging, the State of Maryland will issue a Governor's Proclamation recognizing International Guide Dog Day.

Christine is currently raising her second dog guide puppy. Often when she is out with the puppy, she encounters people who are unaware of the opportunity to become a foster puppy raiser, oftentimes they are very interested in learning more about how they can help. These volunteers are great ambassadors for our country's dog guide program.

Just by happenstance Mr. Speaker, a new staff person in my office is a dog guide user. Watching her work her dog guide on the Metro, in meetings, and around the office has given me a much greater appreciation for the value of these dog guides and how they enable one to keep working despite the loss of vision.